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The Journal Register

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SCHOOL

THEY'RE BACK!



Old Mill Pond Elementary fifth-grader Levi Lukose is happy not only to be back at school, but also to be 'going places.'

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

PALMER – By any measure, Day No. 1 of a new phase was an unqualified success.

March 15 marked the first day of a new phased-in plan to bring students back inside Palmer High School and Old Mill Pond Elementary.

In this plan, both cohorts in both schools have returned for in-person learning for four days a week, except on Wednesday, when deep cleaning and sanitization in schools occurs.

Superintendent of Palmer Public Schools, Patricia Gardner, said she is satisfied with how the first few days on the new plan has played out.

"Fortunately, we have sort of been ahead of DESE (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) in every step of the way since last March,"



Palmer High School seniors Miyah Mega and Abigail Rathbone, with Principal Susan North, holding their Class of 2021 signature shirts inspired by the TV show "Friends."

Gardner said, referring to guidelines by the state in response to the year-long COVID-19 pandemic.

"Even before the shutdown, we met and planned it," Gardner said.

"Two days later, the shutdown commenced. It is the same with when we decided to bring cohorts A and B back together; We'd already gotten our dates figured out and literally the next day, (Commissioner of Education Jeffrey C. Riley) gave out his dates. We thought the best thing for us to do is go ahead with our plan and get kids back four days."

Students, now in better spirits with more time to enjoy in-person learning, are a happy sight to Palmer High Principal Susan North.

"I think it's really important our students are coming back," North said.

"Seniors and juniors came back yesterday and you can really tell a difference with their body language and spirits. They're just so happy to see their peers, especially since some of them have not had the opportunity to see their

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FIRE



Photos courtesy of Brett Miller
Firefighters rush into a house fire on Sunday, which turned out to be a busy day.

Busy day for Bondsville Fire Department and area partners

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

BONDSDVILLE – Firefighters pride themselves on being ready the second the call comes. This particular day was no different, but talk about no rest for the weary.

The Bondsville Fire Department extinguished three fires, including one of Griffin Street, on Sunday, March 14. Several other local departments provided mutual aid.

Assistant Fire Chief Paul Sigovitch said on Griffin Street, the department was notified about a fire at 1:19 a.m., which consumed an entire three-bedroom, residential log

cabin home and created a brush fire, which also threatened the neighbor's properties.

"In the course of this fire, large mutually tanker task force was needed because it was just outside the hydrant district," Sigovitch said.

"The occupant was not at home at the time. It is certainly tragic to lose the home to the fire."

Sigovitch also said the owner was later contacted and spoke with police and fire investigators.

"There were no other occupants that were in the house," Sigovitch said.

"There were no pets lost. In the

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COMMUNITY



Courtesy Photos
BSA Troop 5164 member Maddi Cutty and her cat Mira. Maddi didn't used to be a cat person. Then she took a catch and release class and developed an admiration and love for felines.

BSA Troop 5164 needs pet food, supply donations

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

PALMER – In an effort to support local animal shelters, such as Brimfield's Here Today Adopted Tomorrow Animal Sanctuary, BSA Troop 5164 is running a pet supply drive on March 28.

Scoutmaster Monique Cutty said the idea came from the relationship she and her daughter, Maddi Williams, established with HTAT and its Executive Director and President Rachael Max.

"Rachael contacted us asking if we would be willing to foster some cats," Cutty said.

"We started out as a family fostering camp, but my scout troop became very involved in it."

She also said Maddi took a class to learn how to trap and release feral cats, which further made her interesting in caring for them. Felines are known to be prolific reproducers and the cats are spayed or neutered before release to help reduce the feral population.

After being inspired by her mom's interest in cats, Maddi said the other Scouts plan on learning how to catch and release, too, so

they can help.

What motivated her to want to learn more about helping cats was her genuine admiration for felines.

"I used to hate them, but now they're so awesome," Maddi said.

Cutty also said she understands the importance of assisting people in the community who cannot always afford to take care of their animals. That became especially important during the past year, when the COVID-19 pandemic caused many people to experience economic distress.

"I would hate for them to have to give their animals to a shelter," Cutty said.

"When you get the supplies to the shelter, who give them to people in need, they can keep their pets. I think that's awesome."

Max said she and her organization are extremely grateful for Troop 1564's efforts in assisting the shelter.

"They have been wonderful volunteers for us," Max said.

"I first met them when they first started volunteering. Maddi has been wonderful, asking curious

PETS | page 8

SCENIC

You Can See For Miles



Courtesy photo
Scott Johnson recently posted this scenic photo in the Monson Speaks Facebook group, commenting, "The view from Westview Creamery. The old Mount Tom ski slopes are visible in the center, and the center of Belchertown is marked by the two white towers on the right."

Do you have a recent scenic photo you want to see in print? Email your .jpgs to mharrison@turley.com.



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COVID-19



Turley Publications photos by Michel Harrison
A regional COVID-19 vaccine clinic was held at the Converse School site in Palmer last week. More than 400 doses have been administered there and local officials expect the site to play an important role in vaccinating thousands more once the doses become available.

400 seniors vaccinated at regional site; Many more doses expected

By Michael Harrison
mharrison@turley.com

PALMER — When the flow of COVID-19 vaccines expected to reach regional clinics this spring arrives, the Converse Street site will be ready.

That was evident during a March 12 clinic where nearly all of the 400 people who received their first dose there in February returned to complete the course.

"Every single person who

VACCINE | page 5



Turley Publications staff photo by Jonah Snowden
The Town of Palmer was awarded \$280,000 in the fifth annual round of Site Readiness Programs awards, which will be used to design the replacement of the Church Street Bridge over the Ware River.

Church Street Bridge repair secured with help of state funding

By Jonah Snowden
 jsnowden@turley.com

THORNDIKE – An important local bridge will be repaired with the help of state funding.

On Tuesday, Mar. 9, the Baker-Polito Administration announced \$3,184,000 in funding for 10 municipal projects in the fifth annual round of Site Readiness Programs awards, which is part of the Community One Stop for Growth. The town of Palmer was one of the 10 recipients and was awarded \$280,000.

Palmer plans to use their Site Readiness funds to design the replacement of the Church Street Bridge over the Ware River, which will provide direct access to the Village of Thorndike. This initiative also plays a pivotal role in the redevelopment of the Thorndike Energy Mill Complex.

President and CEO of MassDevelopment Dan Rivera said the town of Palmer was awarded the \$280,000 because it will build infrastructure and create opportunity in Thorndike. “Getting access for both of those sites is really important,” Rivera said.

“The \$280,000 moves the football down the field on getting the bridge replaced.”

Following this announcement, Director of Communications of MassDevelopment Kelsey Schiller said communities that are interested in funding for fiscal year 2022 can submit expressions of interest until April 2.

Municipalities, private sector businesses and nonprofit economic development entities benefit from these awards, which aid in the development of prime sites for large-scale industrial and commercial use. Each funded project will receive financial assistance in feasibility studies, master planning, environmental work, strategic land acquisition and site improvements.

“Our administration is committed to helping communities achieve their economic development goals, and we will continue to work with the public and private sectors to ensure Massachusetts remains a great place to do business,” Gov. Charlie Baker said.

“The Site Readiness Program addresses both goals by helping local partners advance key sites to shovel-ready status and we look forward to these awards supporting projects that create jobs and revenue in their communities.”

For more information on Community One Stop for Growth, visit mass.gov.

Facebook post sparks controversy over dog in town’s care

By Michael Harrison
 mharrison@turley.com

PALMER — Last week, a Facebook post about a dog in the care of the town’s animal control department drew hundreds of posts on a personal page and then dozens more – many angry – on the town’s.

The good news is Bill, the dog who drew so much concern, is doing much better, officials said. An apparently underweight and neglected-looking Great Dane, Bill was rescued from the basement of a local home by Palmer Animal Control. The details about his rescue have not been disclosed, but Town Manager Ryan McNutt said Bill has been examined by a vet, has no serious health issues and is recovering in the care of Animal Control Officer Sydney Plante while staying on her farm.

“Bill went to the vet. They said he’s about six years old and a good weight and size for his breed,” McNutt said.

The controversy over Bill occurred when a now-former town employee in a different department saw Bill in his enclosure at the Palmer animal shelter, part of which can be viewed from outside. The former employee posted a photo of Bill on his personal Facebook page, pointing out what appears to be piles of feces and evidence that Bill was suffering from chronic diarrhea. The poster’s comments included criticism of animal control’s treatment of the dog and he said he was fired for his post.

A post by the town on its page followed and rebutted accusations of neglecting to properly care for Bill. McNutt said Bill is well and if there were feces in his enclosure, it was for a short time until staff could clean it. Any intestinal issues could be attributed to



Courtesy photo
This is a tightly cropped photo of Bill, the dog in the care of Palmer Animal Control, who was the subject of hundreds of Facebook posts last week.

normal circumstances, McNutt said the vet and Plante told him.

“He could have IBS, or it’s just the different types of food he’s fed,” since being rescued, McNutt said.

The poster, reached through Facebook, declined to speak on the record. He did share the photo that he posted. McNutt said he’s prohibited from discussing the claim that the former employee was fired because of his post.

“I can’t speak about any town personnel matters,” he said.

McNutt said “a letter was sent” to Bill’s owner about the dog’s status.

“He becomes town property on March 22,” McNutt said. “Then he can be placed for adoption.”



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Neal will join officials on tour of home afflicted by pyrrhotite

WALES — Congressman Richard Neal will join state Sen. Anne Gobi and state Rep. Brian Ashe April 6 for a tour of a Wales home deteriorating due to the presence of pyrrhotite, a rare iron-sulfide mineral, in the home’s concrete foundation.

Pyrrhotite is essentially a ticking time bomb when used that way.

It reacts poorly to oxygen and moisture, creating rust and cracks in the slowly expanding concrete. It can 10 to 30 years for the cracks to appear. Homeowners throughout the region, including Palmer, Brimfield, and Wales, have homes with pyrrhotite in their foundations. Some may not

yet be aware.

The visit comes after Gobi filed omnibus legislation aimed at addressing the issue in Massachusetts, where it is estimated that as many as 1,500 homes or more may have had their foundations poured with pyrrhotite. “An Act Relative to Crumbling Concrete Foundations,” is intended to address concerns that surfaced during a special commission Gobi co-chaired last year.

The legislation seeks to act on the commission’s recommendations, including tax abatements for affected homeowners. It requires disclosure of foundation repairs for those looking to sell their home and creates new stan-

dards for quarry operators and concrete producers.

A key portion of the bill is allowing the Commonwealth to follow Connecticut’s lead in establishing a “captive insurance company” as a funding mechanism through bonding and a surcharge on homeowners’ insurance policies to help homeowners pay for new foundations. A reimbursement program remains in place for costs associated with visual and core testing of residential home foundations, having been secured by Gobi in the FY19 budget debate and additional funds added last session. That program allows homeowners to be reimbursed at a rate of 100% for visu-

al testing conducted by a licensed professional engineer up to \$400, and a rate of 75% for core sample testing up to \$5,000.

For more information on the legislation or upcoming site visit, please contact Senator Gobi’s office by email at Anne.Gobi@MASenate.gov.

Want to know more?

To learn more about pyrrhotite use in home foundations and connected with affected residents, visit the Massachusetts Residents Against Crumbling Concrete page on Facebook. For more information about Gobi’s bill, email her office at Anne.Gobi@MASenate.gov.

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<p>AUGUST 7 9am - 12pm Monson, 146 Main Street</p>	

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The Journal Register OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.



KOA

This is Koa, 3, in all his 110-pound glory, with his 9-month-old, 20-pound pal, Oliver in Bondsville.

We feature your pets here and on our Facebook page every week. Is your fur friend a dog, cat, chicken, lizard, horse, bird, mouse...you get the point. Is there a pet you're fostering and trying to re-home? All pets are welcome! Email a high-resolution jpg of your pet with a little information to mharrison@turley.com.

Filing for town elected offices underway

Anyone interested in running for any of the Palmer townwide offices that will be decided by the June 8 election can begin filing their nomination papers.

One seat each will be available for the following positions:

Councilor at Large/District 2; Councilor/District 3 Councilor/Planning Board and School Committee. Each term is three years.

Candidates must be registered to vote in Palmer by May 19 to be eligible. There is no filing fee and papers must be returned by April 15.

To obtain the nomination papers and for more information, call the Town Clerk at 283-2608.

DEADLINE

The Journal Register has changed its firm deadline for public submissions to Mondays. To get your submission in for that week's edition, email Editor at mharrison@turley.com or call the office at 413-283-8393 by noon on Mondays. We appreciate the cooperation of our readers.

Corrections

The Journal Register will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2 or 3. To request a correction, send information to Editor at mharrison@turley.com, or call 283-8393, extension 236. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Journal Register, Attn: Editor 24 Water St., Palmer, MA, 01069.

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More state aid coming to local towns

REGION — More help could soon be on the way for local residents in financial distress because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the Community Foundations Grant Program, the state is funneling aid to Brimfield, Holland, Ludlow, Monson, Palmer and Wales for "housing support, food security, utilities, emergency childcare, utilities, basic needs, emergency childcare and transportation," according to a statement by gov. Baker's office.

The local towns, along with others in the area, will share \$423,035 in funding from that program.

The money is a portion of an additional \$5 million from the state support to individuals and households experiencing severe economic hardship due to the pandemic. The funds, awarded to 14 organizations, can be used for other unmet needs of the community.

"These grants are key to sustaining our support for families that have continued to experience harmful consequences caused by the pandemic including food insecurity, housing instability, or a lack of childcare," said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy.

"Thanks to our continued partnership with the Legislature and with appreciation to the statewide network of organizations for their willingness to help, we can ensure families facing these challenges can access these important resources."

In November 2020, the Baker administration announced the initial round of grants totaling \$10 million. The latest round of awards range from \$200,000 to over \$790,000. Each foundation will re-grant program funds to local or regional community-based organizations that have the capacity to efficiently provide immediate relief and support for individuals and families.

"Long after this pandemic has passed, the actions that we take today in support of vital areas like food security, childcare and housing, will continue to matter," said Senate President Karen Spilka.

"These funds, awarded to groups with local expertise, are targeted to where they can have the most direct and lasting impact. The Senate will continue to work with our partners across state government to prioritize our response to the pandemic and its effects on the lives of all residents of the Commonwealth."

Monson election filing ends April 15

Want to run for office?

The annual Monson town election will be held 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday, June 8, at Memorial Hall. Candidates can run for the following offices: Board of Selectmen, one seat, three-year term School Committee, two seats, three-year term School Committee, one seat (to fill the year remaining of a vacated term)

Highway Surveyor, one seat, three-year term Board of Assessors, one seat, three-year term Water and Sewer Commissioner, three-year term Cemetery Commissioner, three-year term Parks and Recreation Commissioner, three-year term

To obtain nomination papers, call 413-267-4115 or email townclerk@monson-ma.gov. The deadline to file nomination papers is Thursday, April 15.

Baystate Wing accepting scholarship applications

Palmer — The Baystate Wing Hospital Auxiliary has announced applications are now being accepted for their annual scholarship program. The scholarships will be awarded to graduating seniors attending local schools, including Ludlow, Monson, Palmer, and Pathfinder high schools who are pursuing higher education in a healthcare field.

"Despite the current COVID-19 virus restrictions, limiting the group's ability to fundraise, the Auxiliary members are proud to continue their annual tradition of offering seven \$1000 scholarships to area students," said Teresa Grove, Auxiliary vice president.

Scholarship Application Information:

- All applications must be submitted by email by April 27.

- Seven (one year) scholarships will be awarded by the Baystate Wing Auxiliary in May of 2021.

- Each scholarship will be in the amount of \$1,000. Applicants must be planning to pursue a career in health care and must be accepted into an accredited health care program such as nursing, medicine, physical therapy, occupational therapy, radiology, pharmacy, medical technology as well as other health care related fields.

- A student who is graduating from Ludlow, Monson, Palmer, and Pathfinder high schools in 2021 can apply.

- Baystate Wing Hospital Auxiliary scholarship applications are available in each school's guidance office and will be accepted by email only.

For more information, student applicants should speak to their guidance counselor.



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Smola supports bill to provide financial relief to small businesses and workers

BOSTON — Representative Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means) recently joined with his colleagues to support legislation providing tax relief and additional assistance to Massachusetts small businesses and employees impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

House Bill 89, An Act financing a program for improvements to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and providing relief to employers and workers in the Commonwealth, passed the House on a vote of 155-0 on March 11. The bill is a redrafted and expanded version of legislation previously filed by Gov. Charlie Baker to protect employers from a 60% unemployment insurance (UI) rate increase scheduled to take effect in April.

Smola said House Bill 89 will freeze the UI rate schedule for business owners for two years and waive state taxes on forgiven Paycheck Protection Program loans. It will also provide employees with access to COVID-related emergency paid sick leave and give a tax credit to unemployed individuals with household incomes of 200% below the federal poverty level.

The House's action comes just one week after Smola and several dozen other legislators wrote to House and Senate leadership on March 4 urging the adoption of a UI rate freeze, along with a state tax waiver for PPP loans.

By freezing the experience rate for employers at Schedule "E" for calendar years 2021 and 2022, House Bill 89 ensures that employers who paid an average of \$539 per worker in UI taxes last year will not see those rates jump to \$858 per worker in 2021. The bill also authorizes up to \$7 billion in borrowing to repay federal UI loans and a temporary, two-year employer assessment to ensure the state's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund remains solvent.

To help Massachusetts businesses avoid further financial hardship, House Bill 89 also waives state taxes on forgiven federal PPP loans. Current Massachusetts tax

laws conform with the federal tax code by exempting corporations from paying a tax on their PPP loans, but do not provide the same protections to so-called "pass-through" business entities. Without this change, Smola noted, many independent contractors, restaurants and small businesses would collectively be facing an estimated \$150 million in state taxes on their PPP loans.

Under House Bill 89, unemployed workers with household incomes below 200% of the poverty level, or about \$25,000 for individuals and \$53,000 for a family of four, would be eligible for a tax credit for 2020 and 2021 equal to 5% of the unemployment compensation received by the taxpayer and included in their gross income for the taxable year. During floor debate, an amendment was adopted to include compensation received under the federal Lost Wages Assistance program funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the definition of what constitutes "unemployment compensation."

House Bill 89 provides additional relief by prohibiting any tax penalties from being imposed by the Department of Revenue for the 2020 taxable year solely for failure to remit taxes on unemployment compensation received last year. Taxpayers who have already been assessed the penalty will receive an abatement.

Smola said House Bill 89 also requires large employers to provide emergency paid sick time to employees who are unable to work due to the coronavirus, including those who are

self-isolating; receiving medical treatment or an immunization; recovering from a disability due to COVID-19; complying with a quarantine order; caring for a family member including a domestic partner; or are unable to telework due to COVID-19. This provision will apply to businesses with 500 or more employees, as those individuals working for companies with fewer than 500 employees are already covered under the federal coronavirus sick leave program.

Employees working 40 or more hours per week will be provided with 40 hours of COVID-19 emergency paid sick leave, while those working a regular weekly schedule but fewer than 40 hours will be eligible for the equivalent of the average number of hours they work per week over a 14-day period. Those individuals whose work schedule varies from week to week would be eligible for emergency sick leave equal to the average number of hours they worked per week over the six-month period immediately preceding their sick leave.

The bill also establishes a COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave Fund, which will be administered by the Executive Office for Administration and Finance and used to reimburse eligible employers for providing emergency paid sick leave. The maximum reimbursement amount allowed is \$850 a week.

House Bill 89 now moves to the Senate for further action. For additional information please contact Smola at Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov or 617-722-2100.

Palmer Fire District No. 1 Water Department

Nomination papers are now available at the Palmer Fire Station 12 Walnut St. for Water Commissioner, and a member of the Prudential Committee. The deadline to submit nomination paper to the District Clerk's office at 12 Walnut St. is April 23, 2021.



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Viewpoints

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

About working while collecting early Social Security benefits

By Russell Gloor
Guest columnist

Dear Rusty: I will be 65 in August of this year. If I start drawing Social Security on my 65th birthday, how will my Social Security check be affected if I continue working at my full-time job, and take home \$1,380 every two weeks, until I reach my full retirement age?-Signed: Working Senior

Dear Working Senior: Social Security has an “earnings test” which applies to anyone who collects benefits before they have reached their full retirement age, or FRA. There is also a “first-year rule,” which applies when someone claims benefits mid-year, prior to their full retirement age. The first-year rule says that if you exceed a monthly limit you aren’t entitled to benefits for that month, and that applies for each remaining month in the first year, after your benefits start. Then, starting in 2022, you’ll be subject to an annual earnings limit. Since you will reach your full retirement age in 2022, your annual limit that year will be a bit more than the 2021 FRA-year limit of \$50,520 (the earnings limits change annually).

If you claim Social Security to start in August when you are 65, for the remainder of 2021 you’ll be subject to a monthly earnings limit of \$1,580. And if your gross earnings for each remaining month in 2021 are more than that, and yours would be, then you won’t be entitled to Social Security benefits for the remaining months of 2021. For clarity, you would also have the option to request that the annual limit (\$18,960 for 2021) be used instead of the monthly limit, but at your earnings level you would still be required to repay all of your 2021 benefits, using the annual limit would require you to repay \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit.

When you file your income taxes next year, Social Security will discover you exceeded the 2021 earnings limit and require you to repay all benefits received in 2021. By “repay,” I mean they will give you an option to repay everything they paid you in 2021 in a lump sum, or they will withhold future benefits until they recover what you owe because you exceeded the monthly limit. Alternatively, you could request a less severe repayment plan, but you would need to negotiate that directly with Social Security.

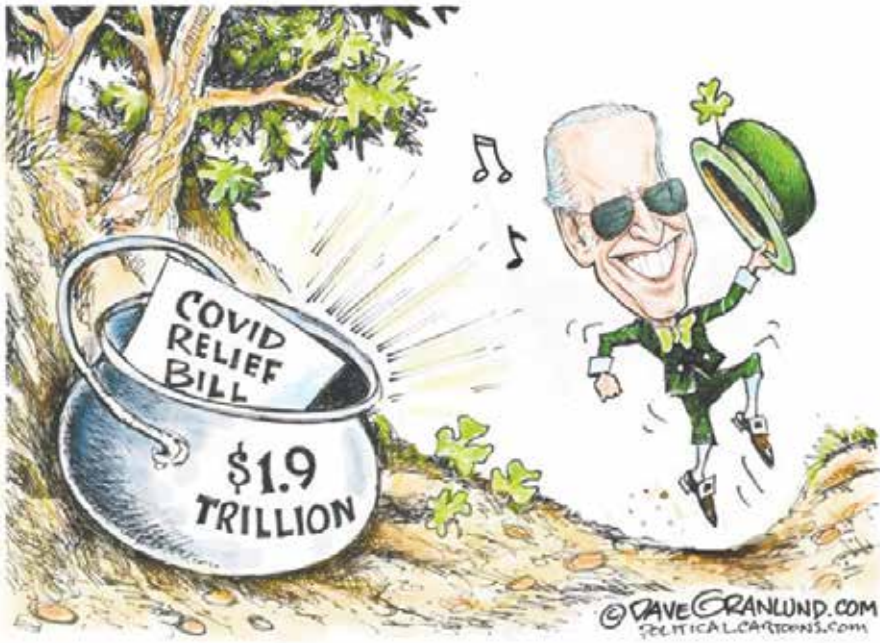
Essentially, if you plan to continue working full time in 2021, it may be wise to simply delay claiming your Social Security for a while, because you will end up needing to return any benefits paid in 2021. You could still claim in August and then inform them they will exceed the limit; in which case they will simply withhold your benefits. But in any case, you won’t be eligible for Social Security benefits in 2021 at the earnings level you shared.

As explained above, your 2022 earnings limit will be more than the 2021 limit of \$50,520 for those achieving FRA, and if you claim benefits to start in January 2022 that higher annual limit would apply. If you’re still working full time at the same earnings level, you probably will not exceed the 2022 annual limit, so your benefits wouldn’t be affected. But if you get a raise and exceed the 2022 limit, Social Security will want back \$1 for every \$3 you exceeded the limit by the FRA-year rate.

Of course, since the earnings limit goes away when you reach your full retirement age, you might also consider just waiting until your FRA to claim Social Security and completely avoid the earnings test.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email sadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



The Garden Lady tackles heirloom tomatoes

Bill, a Maryland “transplant” who continues to read the Ware River News from his new home, had this question for the Garden Lady: “My son and family think I’m Mr. Green-jeans. For Christmas they gave me a pack of “exotic” tomato seeds. Unfortunately, there are some limitations to a 15-foot by 25-foot garden plot. I would like to start some nonetheless. Here is the list: Vintage Wine, Red Zebra, Chocolate Stripes and Black from Tula. All are from a seed company by the name of Urban Gardener in Indiana. Should I bother with these?”

Wow! You posed a wonderful question, Bill, and I am sure that the title of Mr. Green-jeans must have been earned somewhere down the line to warrant such a unique gift. I assumed that with names as poetic as these, you had been given a collection of heirloom tomato seeds. I was fascinated to learn, however, that while all of these varieties are open pollinated, not all are heirloom. What is the difference?

When I consider what the definition of an heirloom is, images of grandma’s china or brooch come to mind, or in my personal case, babci’s water pitcher. To accurately put it into words, an heirloom is something that has been carefully passed down through the generations of a family. The same holds for heirloom plants. They aren’t here by chance, typically. Someone took the time to care for them and save the seeds of their best fruits or flowers so that they could be preserved and shared with others. To be able to save your own seed true to type, the plants need to be open pollinated, which heirlooms are. Here, pollination occurs naturally by bees, insects, animals, careful humans or the wind and the rain. Hybrids are a whole different story, whereby two plants were cross pollinated hoping to pass on specific genetic traits. The result, the third plant, is not stable. If its seeds are saved it is likely you will end up with a fruit or flower that resembles one of the parent plants.

Saving the seeds of open pollinated tomatoes is the perfect first attempt for novice seed savers. They are self-pollinating and will produce offspring true to the parent plant without having to isolate them from other tomato varieties. Other

plants can be tricky, say corn, for example, which needs to be kept separate from other corn by miles to produce seed that is true to type. My first experience with heirloom tomatoes was in my early years at Old Sturbridge Village, where we grew tiny Yellow Pear, for awhile the pinkish Brandywine, and now the uniquely lobed Large Red. I remember my co-worker analyzing which Large Red tomato matched the descriptions from the mid-19th century and choosing to save the seeds of the most authentic looking fruit, thereby passing on accurate genetic traits to future crops. Neat stuff!

It was fun to read that the scarlet color of most modern day tomatoes was actually a gene mutation that breeders discovered and bred into fruits so that they would ripen evenly. Many champions of the heirloom tomato movement argue that this was at the expense of flavor. So Bill, you have a unique opportunity to experience Vintage Wine, a whopper of a tomato, with some of the pink, striped golden fruits weighing over a pound.

Also the oh so sweet Russian heirloom Black from Tula, another large fruit that is deep purple with green shoulders sometimes described as “the ugliest, most delicious tomato ever grown.” The more recent chance discovery, Red Zebra, is a beautiful cherry-red with yellow-orange stripes and a sweet, yet tart tomato flavor. How about Chocolate Stripe, a three to four-inch, exceptionally yummy mahogany colored tomato with olive striping that produces over a long period, taking third place winner for taste at the annual TomatoFest.

So yes, bother with these, enjoy complexities of flavor not found in the average red tomato and save the seed for those you like. I’d love to hear all about it!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

IN THE GARDEN



Roberta McQuaid
Columnist

FRONTLINE STORIES

Baystate doctor always ‘on a mission to help’

Dr. Cuevas Rivera, who previously served as a physician in the United States Army, joined Baystate Primary Care six years ago.

“I became a doctor because I wanted not a job, but a vocation, a mission to contribute the community helping others,” he says.

Here’s the rest of his frontline story:

Primary care has an important – sometimes overlooked – mission in prevention of disease or worsening of chronic medical conditions. A focus in preventive medicine also helps lower the economic burden to patients and to a healthcare industry that struggles with exponentially growing costs.

I graduated from medical school in 2008 in Ponce, Puerto Rico. I completed my residency in Internal Medicine in 2011 at Brooke Army Medical Center, now known as San Antonio Uniform Health Education Consortium in San Antonio, Texas. I served at the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, as an Internist and later as Officer in Charge of the Internal Medicine clinic among other things. I also completed one tour in Afghanistan in 2013.

I was inspired to join the Army by both of my grandfathers who served in Korea in the 1950s. One was drafted at the age of 19 and the other was a Non Commissioned Officer in the 65th Infantry Division in Puerto Rico. I grew up admiring the great men! They were, and I was also obsessed with their pictures in their Army uniforms and how respectable they looked. Growing up in a territory of the United States, I felt that citizenship should not be taken for granted.

I felt the need to prove myself as a citizen and to serve the Republic in the best way I could.

My grandfathers inspired me a sense of civic duty and responsibility. I find those values applicable to the times we live now. We need to continue with social distancing, masking, following guidance from health authorities like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention CDC, the National Institutes of Health, and Baystate Health and to also continue practicing evidence-based medicine, even when it is inconvenient. We have to be willing to sacrifice some personal “liberties” or “my rights” for the community to thrive and the country to survive this pandemic. Wearing a mask, getting a vaccination (when your health allows for it), should be looked as an act of patriotism; an act of love for our neighbors and fellow countrymen and countrywomen.

Every generation is call upon to action and I believe in my heart, that if we act together we can turn this pandemic around and we should come out a stronger community and a stronger country after the dust is settled.

Rivera, primary care provider at Baystate Primary Care – Palmer, joins doctors Khaled Abdelkadar, Mohammad Khan, Joanna Preibisz, Linda Schoonover, Arthur Sgalia, and Nurse Practitioners Marie Chivers, Mary Guertin, Michael Fine, Connie Leung, Maria Ortega, Pam Paton and Sarah Spellman providing care at the Palmer Medical Center located on the campus of Baystate Wing Hospital in Palmer. The team offers both in-person and telehealth visits, for more information or to make an appointment call 413-370-7892.



“It has been a challenging year but I’m proud to say that throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, I have continued to care for our patients,” said Dr. Dennies Cuevas Rivera, primary care provider at Baystate Primary Care – Palmer.

Election letters to the editor welcome

The *Journal Register* welcomes readers to participate in this year’s election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Journal Register, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to mharrison@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Thursday’s newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

For more information, call editor Michael Harrison at 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor’s Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Journal Register.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and guest columns between 500-800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must confirm authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamation of character.

Please send opinions to: **The Journal Register Letter to the Editor** 24 Water St., Palmer MA 01069, or by e-mail to: mharrison@turley.com

The submission deadline for consideration is Monday at noon.

HISTORY MATTERS

March 16 to March 31: American Revolution, OK and March Madness

History Matters is a biweekly feature courtesy of The Grateful American Book Prize, which is awarded to children’s books that emphasize the importance of American history.

After the Revolution, everything is A-OK

By John Grimaldi and David Bruce Smith
Guest columnists

By March 22, 1765, the British, short on funds to absorb the costs of their military presence in the colonies, unloaded the Stamp Act on the overburdened citizenry. Already, they were anteing up for the sugar tax on imported goods, paying an assessment for paper money, and a quartering fee for the housing and food costs of the Redcoats.

The Stamp Tax levied a charge on everything from newspapers, and pamphlets, to playing cards, but that offense kicked off outrage and defiance. According to History.com, “They raised the

issue of taxation without representation and formed societies throughout the colonies to rally against the British government and nobles who sought to exploit the colonies as a source of revenue and raw materials. By October of that year, nine of the 13 colonies sent representatives to the Stamp Act Congress, at which the colonists drafted the ‘Declaration of Rights and Grievances,’ a document that railed against the autocratic policies of the mercantilist British empire.”

Although it was eventually rescinded, the public’s pique unified the colonists, suffused them with nationalism, and, slowly, activated America’s war of independence.

The Grateful American Book Prize recommends “The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution,” by Edmund S. Morgan and Helen M. Morgan.

Okay is created

Did you know that the United States does not have an official language? The Constitution does not specify one, nor is there a law which mandates the country to

speak English; most Americans have accepted it as their “mother tongue,” but adapting it in a very un-British way.

Take the distinctly American “okay,” which started out as an abbreviation: “OK.” It was common in the mid-19th century for younger, educated men and women to deliberately misspell words for amusement. For example, the slang for “all correct” became “oll korrekt” or OK, and was sopped up in the American lexicon when the editor of the March 23, 1839 edition of the Boston Morning Post, tagged it “OK” to denote that the copy was “all correct” or “oll korrekt.”

Other newspapers replicated the abbreviation; it diffused all over the world and morphed into “the most frequently spoken word on the planet.”

The Grateful American Book Prize recommends “OK: The Improbable Story of America’s Greatest Word,” by Allan Metcalf.

March Madness

March Madness is overwhelming the nation. It has been that way since March 27, 1939,

when the University of Oregon beat Ohio State University 46–33 in the final game of the very first NCAA men’s basketball tournament.

If the Super Bowl causes the nation to stop and focus on football for one day, the annual NCAA basketball tournament holds the attention of the nation about three weeks. It starts mid-month when the “first four” –or first round games–are played, and last until the “final four” games culminate with the selection of the two teams that will compete in the championship.

In the beginning, eight schools were invited to participate; this year, 68 will face off in the men’s competition.

The inaugural women’s NCAA tournament of 1982 had representation from 32 schools; the 2021 line-up will be generated from 64.

The Grateful American Book Prize recommends “How March Became Madness: How the NCAA Tournament Became the Greatest Sporting Event in America,” by Eddie Einhorn and Ron Rapoport.

The Journal Register

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VACCINE | from page 1

came through Converse the first time signed up to come back," Palmer Health Inspector Christine Florence said.

"A couple of people, we had to switch dates because they were sick or couldn't be here so they will get it at a later date."

That includes a 104-year-old who had to postpone the booster shot but plans to get it soon.

From the people directing traffic into and out of the parking lot at the Converse School site, to Palmer police opening doors and providing security, intake staff, paramedics and other health professionals, the clinic proceeded like a well-practiced drill.

This phase was for people 75 and older or 65 and older with certain medical conditions. Officials say it won't be long before vaccinations are available for the general population and when that time comes, the Converse site will be able to double capacity.

In the meantime, everyone is in a holding pattern.

"What happened is, the state is only receiving 110,000 doses of vaccine per week and given this small amount they made a decision to cut off the supply to local boards of health and streamline it through mass distribution sites," Florence said.

"Palmer is a regional site serving Palmer, Monson, Brimfield, Sturbridge, Holland, Wales, Ludlow, Warren, and West Brookfield and we're capable of doing at least 800 vaccines per day but we were not chosen as a regional site to continue our operation at this time," she said.

"We received 400 doses for the month of February, and 400 doses for the month of March to do second doses for those initial people that we vaccinated in February. Palmer Board of Health continues to remain hopeful that we will be allowed to operate once more vaccine is available here in the commonwealth."

Staffed by health department employees and volunteers from area towns, the Palmer clinic is an example of the inter-community and inter-government partnerships formed to combat the pandemic, according to Florence and other officials.

"The staff I have here on site was brought in from various communities," Florence said.

"One of our biggest partners is Palmer Ambulance. We have nurses from the CVS Minute Clinic, there's nurses from Ludlow. We have medical



Turley Publications photos by Michel Harrison

Public officials (from left) state Sen. Anne Gobi, state Rep. Jake Oliveira, Palmer Town Manager Ryan McNutt, and Palmer Health Inspector Christine Florence at last week's vaccine clinic in Palmer where 400 second-dose shots were administered.

reserve volunteers, we have the police department that has been a huge asset for us, so it really has been a whole bunch of community and a whole bunch of organizations just banding together to make something great."

While senior citizens are still the priority group for the state's vaccine program, Florence has been reaching out to assisted living and public housing facilities to help make sure no one is falling through the cracks.

"I am currently partnering with Palmer Green Estates, the Palmer, Monson, and Brimfield housing authorities, SMOG Housing, Kirkwood, and Heritage Green – to name a few places – to make sure all residents at these facilities will be able to receive a COVID-19 vaccine from us if they choose to later this month and into the beginning of April," she said.

"I have also applied to the state to provide mobile vaccinations to all home-bound residents in the nine communities we had partnered with previously."

Palmer Town Manager Ryan McNutt, who observed the March 12 clinic, said the town had been "able to leverage an additional 55 doses for a total of 450," and is now focusing on the supply chain and staying ready to administer more shots as the state delivers them.

The state's initial strategy was supplying neighborhood vaccine clinics, then decided to go with a mass-site model like Fenway Park and other large venues in the Boston area. In Western Mass., Eastfield Mall is the only large-capacity site.

"The state had to shift gears because it only received so many vaccines from the federal government," McNutt said.

"We're working on different plans to try to get additional vaccines to do first shots, and we have not yet received any new information from the state about wider eligibility, but we are planning for the fact that it's kind of just a math issue to be able to put that many shots in the people of the Commonwealth's arms."

When that time comes," he said, "It will require maintaining regional sites such as Palmer."

State Sen. Anne Gobi, D-Spencer, and state Rep. Jake Oliveira, D-Ludlow, both toured the March 12 clinic at Converse and said they were impressed with the efficiency of the operation.

Michael Dubois, operations manager with Palmer Ambulance made a point of coming up to the state legislators during the clinic.

"I just came over to extend my gratitude and my sincere thanks to Representative Oliveira and Senator Gobi because without their advocacy I just don't think that any of this would be possible," Dubois said.

"Without our public officials getting the word out there, people would be reluctant to take it, or just not know it's available or don't think it's necessary. They've been extremely good partners of ours and I think keeping this local is a great service to the seniors and a great service to the community."

among those happy to be back.

"I enjoyed playing outside and going places," he said.

"I don't like to stay in my house all the time. I like to go to different places."

At Palmer High, seniors Miyah Mega and Abigail Rathbone, who recently received their senior shirts, said they are ecstatic to return to school.

"What I look forward to the most is just seeing new faces," Mega said.

"Overall, I feel like in-person learning is so much better, because you're not only around other students, but you actually have a teacher in front of you."

Since the cohorts for the high school were split based on last names, Rathbone said she and Mega did not have many fellow students in their classrooms during the previous phase.

"It's so nice to have everyone back," said Rathbone. "We haven't been back together since last year."



Photos courtesy of Brett Miller

A firefighter hooks up a hose to a hydrant while battling one of two house fires and three overall on Sunday.

FIRE | from page 1

end, he did lose his home, tragically, however, there were no injuries or any surrounding properties, affected by the fire."

Palmer Fire Department, Three Rivers Fire Department, Ware Fire Department, Belchertown Fire Department, Warren Fire Department and Monson Fire Department provided Bondsville Fire Department mutual aid. Brimfield Fire Department also provided station coverage.

Later in the afternoon, at 3:15 p.m., the department was called to High Street for another residential fire.

"It was uncertain all occupants had been evacuated, so under premise of this dynamic, all three departments (Palmer, Bondsville and Three Rivers) in town were notified," Sigovitch said.

"Once we arrived on scene, smoke was showing from the second floor. We advanced the hose line and found a small fire in the upstairs bedroom. Fire damage was confined to this one room, with some damage throughout the second floor and limited water damage."

Sigovitch said everyone in the residence self-evacuated themselves and their pets. Everyone escaped injury, and the homeowner has been connected with an aid agency to help with the aftermath.

"We spoke with him yesterday as we had to so some follow up and we did contact Red Cross on their behalf, who is going to reach out to offer some assistance as well," Sigovitch said.

The third fire, which occurred on South High Street, was confined to an area outside the home and Sigovitch said it was caused by careless disposal of smoking materials.

"It was extinguished on our arrival, so no there was so damage to the residence," Sigovitch said.

The dedication and availability of the Bondsville Fire Department was on full display, Sigovitch said.

"As busy as we were, being a volunteer fire department, it certainly taxed our guys in terms of the time and effort away from their families," Sigovitch. "We certainly had a large response from our mutual aid partners, which really helped."

The Bondsville Fire Department, located on 3174 Main St., Bondsville, can be reached at its non-emergency number, 413-283-9036. In an emergency, always dial 911.

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SCHOOL | from page 1

peers since this pandemic started last year in March."

North also said by March 28, the high school's goal is to have all students in grades six through 12 back in school for five days. Also, events such as the Senior Banquet on May 21, Renaissance Ceremony for six and seventh graders on May 24, a Presidential Award ceremony for academic excellence for seventh graders on May 25, and graduation for the Palmer High Class of 2021 on June 6, are scheduled to take place.

Allison Petit, acting principal of Old Mill Pond Elementary, said she is happy to see her students begin to return as well.

"Attendance was tricky, so we did a lot of wellness checks," Petit said.

"We have our kindergarten and first grade classrooms back, minus families who wanted to stay remote," she said. "About 20 at each grade level are still remote, but most of the kids are back. It's noisier and



Turley Publications staff photos by Jonah Snowden

First-grader Nina Rossetti enjoys some time on the playground at Old Mill Pond Elementary school.

it's happier and it's such a big move in the right direction."

Old Mill Pond Elementary fifth-grader Levi Lukose said he is

Brimfield Community Solar Project - Open to New Subscribers

A local community solar project is being installed this year in Brimfield, MA and is now signing up subscribers.

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MassWildlife proposes first license increase in 26 years

By Tyler S. Witkop
Correspondent

Flashback to the year 1996. Bill Clinton began his second term as U.S. president, Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls won their fourth NBA title and a gallon of gasoline cost \$1.23.

In Massachusetts, resident hunting and fishing licenses increased to \$22.50 and a trapping license rose to \$30.50.

Despite drastic changes to everyday life with the advent of the internet and smartphone technology that connects people to goods and services anywhere on the globe with the push of a button, those license fees remain as one of the few relics from 1996 still in place today.

Now, facing drastic increases in both costs and services, and declining revenues, the state's Division of Fisheries and Wildlife is proposing its first increase in license fees, to go in effect in 2022.

To better inform the public of the rationale and license structure, MassWildlife is offering a series of online informational sessions via Zoom throughout the month. The last will take place Tuesday, March 25 at 6:30 p.m. To participate, visit www.mass.gov/info-details/masswildlife-funding#how-will-masswildlife-fund-conservation-in-the-future?

MassWildlife Director Mark Tisa informed participants of a March 9 informational session that each year, roughly 500 bodies of water are stocked with trout with nearly half being 12-inches or larger, more than 40,000 pheasant are released on public lands for hunters, and the state manages more than 226,000 acres of land. In addition to managing game species, all of the state's threatened and endangered species fall under the management of MassWildlife.

Budget gap

For fiscal 2021, the division's revenue, according to the presentation, was roughly \$16.9 million. Fees from licenses, permits and stamps accounted for 39% of that figure or roughly \$6.6 million. Forty-eight percent, or \$8 million, came from federal wildlife and sport fish restoration funds.



Courtesy photos

Fishing and hunting license fees are scheduled to go up this year as they have not gone up in 25 years. as costs and services, and declining revenues, The state's Division of Fisheries and Wildlife has proposed the increases as its costs and services go up and revenues are declining. About 40,000 pheasants are raised by the state and stocked on lands across the commonwealth.



State fishing and hunting licenses may go up for the first time in 25 years. The state's Division of Fisheries and Wildlife stocks about 500 bodies of water with trout. These fish are rainbow trout.

ration funds.

State mandated expenses such as salaries and health insurance amount for 20% or nearly \$3.5 million of the \$18.4 million in expenses for fiscal 2021, more than what the Division pays for its hatcheries, which is nearly \$2.5 million, or land acquisition and maintenance, which is roughly \$2 million. Thirty-three percent, or roughly \$6 million, is used for habitat management.

"We have been very fiscally responsible," Tisa said of the man-

agement of MassWildlife, pointing to the fact that licenses haven't increased in 25 years. He said had license fees kept with the rate of inflation, hunters and anglers would be paying \$37.52 today (in addition to the \$5 wildland stamp fee).

A major issue leading to the declining revenues is the decline in hunting and sporting (combination hunting and fishing) licenses, which Tisa said is about 50 percent for hunting licenses and roughly 20 percent for sporting licenses. Addition-

Proposed Hunting and Fishing License Fees 2022

(Source: MassWildlife)

- Resident fishing (17 and older) - \$40
- Resident Fishing (65-69) - \$20
- Resident fishing 3-day - \$20
- Non-resident fishing - \$50
- Non-resident minor fishing (15-17) - \$8
- Non-resident 3-day fishing - \$30.50
- Resident trapping - \$40
- Resident trapping (65-69) - \$20
- Non-resident trapping - \$215
- Resident hunting - \$40
- Non-resident big game - \$112
- Non-resident small game - \$78
- Resident sporting - \$75
- Resident sporting (65-69) - \$37.50
- Trap registration number/renewal - \$20
- Archery stamp - \$20
- Primitive firearms stamp - \$20
- Waterfowl stamp - \$20
- Antlerless deer permit - \$20
- Turkey permit - \$20
- Bear permit - \$20
- Pheasant and quail stamp - \$20

ally, the state now issues in excess of 27,000 free licenses to sportsmen and women aged 70 and older each year, resulting in a loss of about \$1 million in non-reimbursable funds.

This year alone, Tisa estimates a budget gap of \$1.5 million between revenue and expenses, which will be made up by tapping into the roughly \$9.5 million in the state's Inland Fish and Game Fund. At the current trajectory, MassWildlife will have a \$4.1 million revenue gap and deplete the balance of the Inland Fish and Game Fund by fiscal 2025.

'Path Forward'

"The challenge is finding a path forward," Tisa said. "We only have so many tools in our tool box," noting that the license fee structure is the one tool the Department of Fish and Game and MassWildlife controls.

Under the new proposal, residents would pay \$40 for hunting, fish-

ing and trapping licenses. Sporting licenses would increase from \$40 to \$75. Archery and primitive firearms stamps would increase from \$5.10 to \$20. All other hunting stamps and permits would increase from \$5 to \$20. Additionally, MassWildlife is proposing a new stamp for pheasant and quail hunting at \$20.

"We don't like the idea at all," Tisa said. "It's unfortunate it's happening at a difficult time," but the proposal should sustain the Inland Fish and Game Fund until fiscal 2030.

Tisa and Fish and Game Commissioner Ron Amidon said that the state legislature would need to address other changes, whether they be reimbursing for free licenses, imposing fees on other "non-consumptive" public land users like bird watchers or kayakers, or increasing funding. Unfortunately, they told those in attendance March 9, neither one of them can lobby legislators for such changes. That, they said, is incumbent upon individual residents.

Mixed reaction

Reaction to the proposal has been mixed. While most seem to understand the issues at hand, increasing the cost of licenses is an added expense for no added benefits in the field. Some expressed disappointment that there is little bass management taking place statewide, others that hunters seem to be taking the brunt of the increases. Georgetown resident Bob Pasquale asked if there had been any thought to adding a trout stamp, as anglers are able to use their licenses essentially 24/7, 365 days a year.

Tisa said they had considered such a stamp, however it would likely create more problems, particularly with enforcement and fish mortality rates. He noted that unlike states, such as Virginia, which have few trout-stocked waterbodies, nearly all of Massachusetts' freshwater resources are stocked with trout. And, unlike pheasant or quail hunters, who can easily identify a flushing pheasant or quail from a ruffed grouse or a non-game species, anglers typically have no idea what fish took the bait on the other end of the line.

"Everyone walking a dog on a wildlife management area [during hunting season] is interfering with a hunt," Norwood resident Steve Flaherty said, expressing concerns during the March 9 session. "We need somebody at the state level advocating for us."

Amidon and Tisa said they need residents to advocate the legislature for changes, whether it be funding, access or enforcement. They also reminded those on the call that should the new license fee schedule move forward, there will be public hearings. Any resident wishing to provide input on the proposals are invited to direct comment electronically at mass.gov/masswildlife-funding or by sending mail to MassWildlife re: License Fee, 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581.

'Make it easy'

While he was unable to attend the information session, Chicopee sportsman Nelson Molina, who has been hunting for the last three years, expressed his frustration that the state seems to be making it harder for folks to enter the woods legally, especially those in urban communities.

"How do you make [hunting] appealing to people who have never hunted?" Molina asked, noting his own struggles as a new hunter trying to learn everything from safe firearm handling to where to go.

"I ate pheasant for the first time in my life this year and it's not as crazy people make it seem," he said.

Molina said the issue, from his perspective, is a tricky one as the state has only gotten more restrictive with gun laws and the free, mandatory hunter education (required for new hunters) courses are almost non-existent in Western Massachusetts. He said he paid to take the Texas hunter education program online because he couldn't find a course in Massachusetts that fit his schedule. He said more programs should be offered online and locally in order to remove barriers to accessibility.

"You have to make it easy," Molina said. "People don't want to do work."

Massachusetts banks partner to hold virtual Credit For Life event

WARE – Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving central and western Massachusetts, proudly announced it has partnered with eight local banks to transform the Credit for Life program from an on-site event to a virtual event. Credit for Life, a popular financial literacy program, has been offered for more than a decade within many Massachusetts public schools.

With most, if not all, schools adopting a virtual learning model for students, Credit for Life organizers connected last summer

to explore a virtual experience in 2021. As part of the virtual transformation, organizers enlisted FitMoney.org, a nonprofit financial literacy organization, to serve as the key fiscal agent, and Stackpole & Partners, of Newburyport, for the design and implementation of an interactive website. Contributing partners are Country Bank, Institution for Savings, Cape Cod 5, Bay Coast Bank, HarborOne Bank, The Savings Bank, Rockland Trust and Westfield Bank.

During the half day online Credit for

Life Fair, students will assume the role of a 25-year-old adult and be asked to make financial decisions on how to spend their money.

"The Credit for Life Fair is one of the most important and impactful events we offer every year," said Jodie Gerulaitis, vice president of community relations at Country Bank. "We are honored to be able to partner with other local banks to make the fair a reality again for students. The interactive website is a tool that educators and others

can use in the current learning environment. Teachers are being asked to do so much right now, this is just one small way we can offer our support."

Development of the website is in the final stages; the group is hopeful that the site will be ready for use by high schools towards the end of March. In addition, the partnership group is also in the process of establishing a 501c3 that will allow for the ability to raise funds and plan for future school financial literacy initiatives similar to creditforlife.org.

For more information, please contact Gerulaitis at 800-322-8233 or jgerulaitis@countrybank.com

Country Bank is a full-service mutual community bank serving central and western Massachusetts with 14 offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton and Worcester. Country Bank is a member of FDIC, DIF, and the SUM network.

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FOOTBALL



Palmer football prepares for its first game.

Panthers prepare to open season



The Palmer defense lines up for a play at practice.

PALMER – The Palmer High School football team entered its final week of preparation for the shortened Fall 2 season. The Pan-

thers are set to play six games in the shortened season, which is supposed to include a matchup with rival Ware. The season starts on

Saturday afternoon at 12:30 p.m. when Palmer hosts Chicopee High School.

Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Chance Lee works around looking for an opening to run.



Jack Letendre winds back to make a pass attempt.

FOOTBALL

Pioneers prepare for spring gridiron



Quarterback Jordan Talbot rears back to attempt a pass.

PALMER – The Pathfinder Regional High School football team finally took the fields this month after seeing the season delayed from the

fall. Pathfinder is set to open up the season this weekend and will play a six-week campaign.



Austin Lagimoniere makes the catch on a pass.



Quarterback Jordan Talbot makes a long pass attempt.



Pathfinder's defense works during practice last week.

MIAA

Sectional tournament returns in spring season

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – After a year without any type of high school tournaments due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place, a spring tournament is scheduled to take place in 2021.

As of now, it is believed that the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association will prepare for the traditional three-season format, and that traditional format will include a change to a statewide tournament and the elimination of the sectional tournament.

The 2020-2021 school was set to be the last year for the sectional tournaments after a vote last year to change the format of the tournament. Now the spring will feature sectional tournaments only following a recent vote by the MIAA.

There was an emphasis to try to bring back a tournament for the spring season after players missed out on an entire season last year and the MIAA did not want that to happen two years in a row.

The entire spring season was delayed multiple times before Gov. Charlie Baker closed down schools in late April for the remainder of the school year. The closure effectively cancelled the sport season as it was deemed not safe to play.

The MIAA thus far has gone with a four-season format, including a bubble or “wedge” season to fit sports in that were not played in the first two seasons. Known as Fall 2, a variety of sports are being played right now, though football is

BASEBALL

Quabbin Valley Baseball set to return

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

SOUTH HADLEY – Last year, COVID-19 concerns caused the cancellation of several adult recreational baseball leagues.

With increasing vaccinations and protocols in place, the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, a league for players 28 and over, will return with a full season beginning at the end of April.

League President Eric Castonguay, who also serves as the athletic director at South Hadley High School, held a league-wide meeting on Sunday morning via Zoom to go over changes that will be in place to play the 2021 season and discuss the status of the six teams for the 2021 season. The six-team league is a strictly Sunday, 10 a.m. league. All games are played at that time for 15 weeks beginning April 25 and ended in mid-August. There are Sundays off for the Memorial Day and Fourth of July holiday.

The league was going to attempt a shortened season last year when Massachusetts went through the initial stages of its re-opening plan, but a few teams dropped out prior to the beginning, effectively cancelling the entire season.

This year, all six teams are back and on board, but there is a need for some new blood into the league.

The league is in need of about 25 players to fill out the rosters for this year. There are just a few weeks remaining before the league's draft.

Managers and members of the league's board discussed the COVID-19 protocols and field arrangements for the 2021 season.

Due to the restrictions in place in Easthampton, teams will only have limited games at Daley Field at Nonotuck Park. Castonguay announced the remainder of games would be played at South Hadley High



The Quabbin Valley Baseball League is set to return this season.



Sign-ups for the league are ongoing and the league is in need of new players for the 2021 season.

School and the Beachgrounds Park, which is also in South Hadley. Booster Field is not available for the league, Castonguay said. Three games are typically played each Sunday. Each team plays their five opponents three times each. Every team makes the play-offs with a football-style format where the lower four seeds play in the first week of the playoffs and the winners meeting the top two seeds in the semifinals.

Castonguay explained while

the gameplay itself will be largely the same, a number of “habits” will need to be changed in order for the league to safely be played.

First, like many sports, masks are required to be worn while involved in the game or on the benches. Benches will need to be spread out in order to allow for social distancing. Mask breaks can take place up the foul lines with proper distance from all players,

QUABBIN | page 8

BASEBALL

Details for Basketball 2020 Hall induction released

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame announced today its newly established schedule of events surrounding the Enshrinement of the highly anticipated Class of 2020. Due to the global pandemic, the event was postponed from August 2020 to May 14-16, 2021. To allow for proper physical distancing and additional COVID-19 safety protocols, the Hall of Fame has elected to relocate Enshrinement for one year from Springfield, Mass. to an environmentally controlled venue at Mohegan Sun in Uncasville, Conn with all events being held in one single site.

“There has been great interest surrounding the Class of 2020 as potentially one of our most historic classes to date,” said John L. Doleva, President and CEO of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. “We are grateful to our

longtime marketing partner Mohegan Sun for providing a beautiful venue where we can properly honor these iconic figures in basketball while accounting for the health and safety of our attendees. Coinciding with the reveal of our multi-million-dollar museum renovations, we couldn't be more excited to celebrate the Class of 2020.”

The event schedule for the Class of 2020 Enshrinement Weekend is as follows (all times eastern*):

*Event start times are subject to change

Friday, May 14
2 p.m. - Class of 2020 Press Conference

5 p.m. - Hall of Fame Awards Celebration and Gala

Saturday, May 15
5 p.m. - Hall of Fame Enshrinement Ceremony

BASKETBALL | page 8

Westfield State announces return to sports action

WESTFIELD — Westfield State University will begin play for spring sports later this month, the school announced last week in conjunction with the Council of Presidents of the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference.

“A spring season for our student athletes is very welcome news at Westfield State, where athletics are integral to our campus culture and student experience,” said Interim President Roy H. Saigo, PhD. “Our Westfield State Owls—the 2020 Smith Cup recipients—will be a force as safe and competitive intercollegiate play resumes for our teams.”

The Owls plan to hold intercollegiate competition in men’s and women’s track and field, women’s lacrosse, baseball, softball and men’s golf this spring.

“We are tremendously excited

that our student-athletes will have the chance to return to the field of play,” said Westfield State Athletics director Dick Lenfest.

The pandemic cut seasons short exactly one year ago today, when the NCAA announced it was cancelling championships competition for 2020 due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

“It’s been a long year,” said Lenfest, who has also been tasked with managing the school’s coronavirus testing for the past nine months. “While all of our athletes have experienced disappointment as the pandemic has affected both the ability to conduct competitions and even practices, the announcement today is a win for Owls athletics. By getting back to the field of play this spring the athletes who had their seasons cut short a year ago will be the first ones to get back on the field, providing a

sense of equity as it appears that no athlete or team would miss more than one season of competition due to the pandemic.”

“It’s important for our student-athletes, coaches and staff to stay vigilant as we return to play,” said Lenfest. “The university is providing COVID testing each week before the contests, which gives us the opportunity to play intercollegiate games, but both on and off the field, while traveling, and even in the residence halls and apartments, it is important to wear your mask, wash and sanitize your hands frequently, and maintain safe social distancing protocols.”

Per the decision of the MASCAC Council of Presidents, no spectators will be permitted at spring 2021 sport contests. Westfield State athletics plans to live video stream all of its home contests via WestfieldStateOwls.com,

and the MASCAC.TV app for Roku and Apple TV streaming, and live stats for the games are also provided.

The spring sport schedules have been altered in conjunction with the presidents’ announcement. Updated schedules for the Owls’ spring sports teams will be posted shortly on WestfieldStateOwls.com. If weather or pandemic conditions force changes as the seasons progress, the online schedules are the first place to be updated accordingly.

Westfield’s traditional fall and winter sports teams will continue to have practice opportunities throughout the remainder of the spring semester, with plans to return to full completion in fall of 2021 pending public health conditions.

Sign-ups now open for Quabbin Area Little League

BARRE — The Quabbin Area Little League baseball/softball organization has announced sign-ups are now open. You can go to www.quabbinll.com through April 1 to sign up. The costs for baseball are as follows: T-Ball - \$50, Youth Minor - \$65, Minor Kid Pitch - \$75, and Major Kid Pitch - \$85. The softball costs are: 8U Instructional - \$50, 10U Minor Kid Pitch - \$65, 13U Major Kid Pitch - \$85. There are \$10 discounts for multiple family member

registrations and financial assistance is available for those in need.

There are also volunteer opportunities available. Help the league by coaching as a head or assistant coach, volunteer to assist with field maintenance, or many other tasks that help the entirely volunteer-run organization operate. Have questions about registering or volunteering? Email qallld3ma@gmail.com for more information.

Hampshire association seeking umpires

REGION — The Hampshire Franklin Baseball Umpire Association (HFBUA) is planning to conduct classes for the 2021 baseball season following all recommended COVID-19 protocols including the possibility of on-line instruction. The association covers umpiring of scholastic baseball for all of Hampshire and Franklin county schools registered under MIAA and several other baseball leagues in the area. If you are interested in umpiring baseball or obtaining further information regarding the upcoming classes please contact Roger Booth - Secretary/Treasurer of the HFBUA via email at quiltthunter@comcast.net.

BASKETBALL from page 7

Sunday, May 16

1 p.m. - Hall of Fame Ribbon Cutting

(\$24 million dollar renovation including Jerry Colangelo Court of Dreams and Museum Galleries)

The Hall of Fame Awards Celebration and Gala will recognize Hall of Fame Award winners from 2020 including John W. Bunn Lifetime Achievement recipient Tim Nugent, Curt Gowdy Media Award recipients Michael Wilbon, Mike Breen, Jim Gray and TNT’s Inside the NBA, as well as Mannie Jackson Human Spirit Award recipients Wayne Embury, George Raveling and Bill Russell.

The highly anticipated Class of 2020 includes: 18-time NBA All-Star and five-time NBA champion Kobe Bryant, 15-time NBA All-Star and three-time NBA Finals MVP Tim Duncan, 15-time NBA All-Star and nine-time NBA All-Defensive First Team selection Kevin Garnett, four-time National Coach of the Year Eddie Sutton, two-time NBA

Champion coach Rudy Tomjanovich, 10-time WNBA All-Star and four-time Olympic gold medalist Tamika Catchings, three-time NCAA National Championship Coach of Baylor Kim Mulkey, five-time Division II National Coach of the Year Barbara Stevens and longtime FIBA executive Patrick Baumann.

A limited number of VIP Ticket Packages are available at this time. Any remaining single event tickets will be available for purchase Monday, March 15. For further information, a listing of COVID-19 protocols surrounding this event and purchasing options, visit www.hoophall.com/Enshrinement/Tickets.

As the health and safety of the Hall of Famers, fans and staff is of the utmost importance, the Basketball Hall of Fame will continue to work with the Mohegan Tribal Health Department to monitor the COVID-19 situation closely in the coming months and provide updates as needed. For more information and the latest updates, visit www.hoophall.com/Enshrinement or follow @hoophall on Twitter and Instagram.

QUABBIN from page 7

Castonguay said.

Last summer, umpires who did high school and adult baseball in other leagues called balls and strikes from behind the pitcher’s mound. Castonguay said umpires voted recently to have an umpire back behind the plate.

Other habits being curtailed for the start of the season are the acts of spitting, spitting pumpkin or sunflower seeds, and the removal of all garbage from playing fields.

“Fields are not providing garbage cans,” said Castonguay. “So whatever we bring in, we have to take with us.”

The league may issue trash bags to teams so trash can be bagged and taken away by the players after games.

The modifications will be in place for the start of the season, but could change as the season goes on depending on the pace of vaccinations and when the governor lifts various restrictions.

The cost to play in the league this season is \$192.51 and registration can be found at www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. The league draft is set for April 11 at 10 a.m. at a location to be determined.

Turleysports

Athlete of the Week

Chance Lee
Palmer High School

In Palmer’s final boys basketball game of the season, the Panthers were led by Lee with 13 points

To nominate someone for Athlete of the Week, contact Managing Sports Editor Gregory A. Scibelli at 413-283-8393 ext. 258 or send an e-mail to gscibelli@turley.com.

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TOURNEY from page 7

the primary sport being played over the next several weeks. But Belchertown and Monson are also playing basketball. South Hadley and Southwick are among teams playing girls volleyball. Indoor track is also being played. However, there will be no tournaments played during the Fall 2 season, which is set to conclude at the end of April.

The spring season, which usually begins in mid-March and ends in mid-June, will go from the beginning of May with a cut-off of July 3 to finish the season.

In order to limit travel, the MIAA did not want to have the state tournament, and have decided sectional tournaments can take place. As of now, the tournament is set to take place at home fields of higher seeds, with no neutral sites being used. However, with the vac-

cination effort accelerating, restrictions could lift as the next two months progress, allowing high school sports a bit more freedom.

Spring sports to be played include baseball, softball, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, boys tennis, girls tennis, boys track, girls track, and boys volleyball. Wrestling is also scheduled to take place this spring.

One other caveat to the spring modifications is that teams eliminated from postseason play, can play games against other non-qualifiers through the end of the spring season.

Spring teams are used to a rushed season due to the typical unpredictable end to the winter and conditions on fields. However, with the spring sports beginning in May, field conditions should be ideal to begin games as soon as teams are ready.

PETS | from page 1

questions about the cats and I’ve seen her grow her interest in us and what more she can do to help the community and cats.”

Also, not just as scoutmaster, but as a mother, Williams said she is proud of Maddi’s determination to put this drive together.

“This was all her initiative,” she said. “She saw a need during the pandemic, to particularly help pets and pet owners. I’m proud of Maddi and the girls for deciding to make a difference in their community.”

The March 28 pet supply drive is scheduled to take place noon to 2 p.m. at 114 Thorndike Street in Palmer. HTAT specifically needs wet dog food and dry cat food in addition to supplies such as toys. To learn more about HTAT, including how to get assistance, go to heretoday-sanctuary.org and visit them on Facebook.

Learn more about Troop 1564 on Facebook.

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DEATH NOTICES

Nikolas J. DiGregorio, 87
Died: March 4, 2021
Funeral Services are private



Jeanne C. Hopfe, 86
Died: March 11, 2021
Funeral Mass: 12:30 p.m.
March 20 at
St. Thomas the Apostle Church

Joan G. Mulloy (Cuoco), 84
Died: March 9, 2021
Services are private

Norman Neil Turner, 82
Died: March 14, 2021
Graveside service: 1 p.m.
March 24 at
Evergreen Cemetery, Medway

O B I T U A R I E S

Nickolas J. DiGregorio, 87

BRIMFIELD — Nickolas J. DiGregorio, 87, passed away peacefully on Thursday March 4, 2021, at the Vero Healthcare Center of Wilbraham after a long illness.

Nick was born in Pearl River, N.Y., on Dec. 18, 1933, son of the late Francesco and Stephanie (DeMarco) DiGregorio. He was a devout and faithful Catholic. Nick played semi-pro football, coached little league, and loved to dance. He also served in the Army National Guard and was stationed in New Jersey.

In his younger days, Nick married his high school sweetheart, Irene O'Brien, and eventually settled down in Brimfield. Nick owned and operated DiGregorio & Son Construction and was passionate about his work, especially his masonry skills. He also plowed for the state of Massachusetts for many years.

Nick greatly enjoyed meeting new people, working, and spending time with his family and friends, especially his uncle Kenny and Uncle Bernie.

All through Nick's life, he was known as the crazy ginny with the meatball eyes. He will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved him. May he rest in peace.

He was predeceased by his wife Irene (O'Brien) DiGregorio; his nephew Jay; his niece Patty; and his great-granddaughter Skylar. Nick is survived by his longtime companion Diane Froehlich; his son Nickolas DiGregorio Jr. and his wife Paula; his daughters: Vicki Finnegan and her husband Sean and Nickole DiGregorio and her fiancée Ricardo Cedenio; two sisters,



Martha Goodwin and Concheta Brown; his brother Jack DiGregorio and his wife Gail; his sister-in-law Marion O'Brien; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends; he also leaves his four-legged girl, Daisy.

In lieu of flowers, share your fond memories with Nick's family by sending a card to P.O. Box 505 Palmer, MA 01069. Thank you and God bless.

Private funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home. A guest book is available at shawmajercik.com, where you may offer condolences, share fond memories, or light a candle in remembrance of Nick.

Jeanne C. Hopfe, 86

PALMER — Jeanne C. Hopfe, 86, passed away unexpectedly on March 11, 2021, in North Fort Myers, Fla.

She was born on May 28, 1934, in Ware to the late Anthony and Beatrice (Giard) Lemoine. Jeanne grew up in Ware and attended the French Catholic Church and School there. She was a devout Catholic and a parishioner of St. Thomas the Apostle in Palmer.

Jeanne spent her lifetime as a caring mother for her son, Kevin, who was born with special needs. Jeanne was a self-motivated, insightful woman who forged new paths in the antique resale business. As Jeanne's husband, Robert, built Sturbridge Antiques from the ground up in 1980, she established the concept for "a group shop," the first of its kind in New England. Before long, all booths were filled, including a waiting list!

Jeanne organized her business on fairness and kindness, drawing in the finest of experts in the antique field. After running Sturbridge Antiques for 25 years, Jeanne and Robert sold their business and bought Brimfield Acres

North with Colleen James, including an antique group shop and the seasonal antique flea market. This partnership lasted 20 years, followed by Jeanne's daughter, Suzanne Rohrbacher and son-in-law, Michael Rohrbacher, joining as new co-owners and continuing today.

Jeanne's work was her passion, always motivated to meet people and share her depth of knowledge about antiques. She always took time to recall personal stories shared with her and to inquire with hopes that all has continued well. The antique environments she managed always conveyed a sense of camaraderie for dealers and shoppers alike. Daily expressions of respect, concern and friendship were the cornerstone of Jeanne's interactions with others.

This was her gift.

Jeanne was predeceased by her husband, Robert Hopfe, in 2018. She will be forever missed by her daughter, Suzanne Rohrbacher and husband Michael of Fort Myers, Fla., as well as her



son, Kevin Hopfe of Chicopee. She also leaves two grandchildren, Steven Rohrbacher of Holly Springs, N.C., and Marie Rohrbacher of Easthampton. Jeanne had a very special bond with her 2-year old great-grandchild, Chloe Rohrbacher, daughter of Steven and Kristi Rohrbacher. Jeanne also leaves many cherished friends and relatives whom she frequented throughout her lifetime.

Calling hours will be 4-7 p.m. Friday, March 19, at the Beers and Story Palmer Funeral Home. Family and friends may gather at the funeral home at noon Saturday, March 20, for the procession to a 12:30 Funeral Mass in St. Thomas the Apostle Church. Burial will immediately follow in St. Thomas Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to JERICHO by visiting jerichobeca.org or to the Special Olympics by visiting support.specialolympics.org. For more information, visit beersand-story.com.

Joan G. Mulloy, 1936-2021

MONSON — Joan G. (Cuoco) Mulloy, 84, passed away Tuesday, March 9, 2021, surrounded by love of family.

Joan was born in Springfield March 31, 1936, to the late Angelo and Ella (Aschettino) Cuoco. She grew up in Springfield and was a graduate of Commerce High School. She and her husband moved to Monson 53 years ago where they raised a family. Joan enjoyed gardening and loved taking care of her family. She enjoyed traveling with her husband. For many years, in the winter months, they would pack up the camper and drive across the country to Arizona spending

time with family.

Joan leaves her loving husband of 68 years, James F. Mulloy; two daughters, Linda Conant and her husband Randy of Monson; Marlene Murphy and her husband Jim of Powell, Wy.; two sons, James J. Mulloy and his wife Shari of Monson and Patrick Mulloy and his wife Sherry of Monson; two sisters, Sandra Pericolosi and her husband John of Wilbraham and Gilda Cuoco of Arizona; four grandchildren: Justin Conant and his wife Amy Wilson; Jessie Otto and her husband Eric; Rhianan Rhodes and her husband Chris; Ryan Mulloy and his

wife Amber; and a great granddaughter, Mia Gentry. Joan was predeceased by her sisters Mary Ann Choquette, Carmella Meidowicz, and Angela Chipriani.

All services are private and have been entrusted to Lombard Funeral Home of Monson.

In lieu of flowers, consider a memorial donation in Joan's name to the Monson Fire Department Ambulance Fund PO Box 335 Monson, MA 01057 or to The American Cancer Society www.cancer.org. For online condolences visit lombardfuneralhome.com.

Norman Neil Turner, 82

Norman Neil Turner, 82, of Palmer passed away March 14, 2021.

He was born on July 9, 1938 in Milford to Lester N. and Esther (Pohlman) Turner. Norman was raised in Bellingham and moved to Palmer in 1978 and in 2019 moved to Stittville, N.Y., to be closer to his daughter.

He worked as a truck driver for many years and was employed at Overland Mills and Turley Publications. After his retirement, he worked as a van

driver for the Palmer Senior Center and was also an active member. Norman enjoyed water skiing and most of all was a "people person" who loved engaging in conversations with anyone who would listen.

He will be missed by his three children, Tammy Park of Stittville; Dawn Turner of Palmer; and Norman Turner Jr. of Hawaii. He is also survived by five grandchildren: Jordan Turner, Kelsey Turner, Kobi Turner, Wyatt Park, and Madison Park.

Norman was predeceased by his wife, Clara M. (Florek) Turner in 2016 and his sister, E. Patricia Dolloff in 2015.

Calling hours will be held 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday, March 24, at the Beers & Story Palmer Funeral Home. A Graveside service will follow at 1 p.m. at Evergreen cemetery in Medway.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his memory to the Palmer Senior Center. For more information, visit beersandstory.com.

Police/Fire

Police Logs

PALMER PD

The Palmer Police Department responded to several dozen calls from March 9-16, including calls for medical assistants, mutual aid, traffic accidents, citizen assistance, well-being checks, and more.

Those arrested will appear at the Palmer District Court and are

innocent until proven guilty:

Among the calls was an arrest on Friday, March 12. Darren Francis Sieger, 35, of 175 High Rd., Gilbertville, was arrested at 9:33 p.m., on Thorndike Street on Palmer, on charges of possession of Class A drug and possession of a Class B drug.

Other arrest included a charge

of larceny of property of \$1,200 or less against Lynn A. LaRose of 16 Stewart Street in Bondsville; Shawn E. Greaney, 35, of 1025 Central Street Apt. M in Palmer was charged with assault by dangerous weapon.

Fire Logs

PALMER FD

The Palmer Fire Department responded to 13 calls March 3-8:

On Tuesday, March 9, at 12:34 p.m., the department responded to a Brush Fire on Palmer Road in Monson. The department returned to service at 5:30 p.m.

On Thursday, March 11, at 1:58 p.m., the department responded to motor vehicle accident with a fluid spill on Park Street. The department returned to service at 2:26 p.m.

On Friday, March 12, at 9:27 p.m., the department responded to an unauthorized burning on North Main Street. The department returned to service at 10 p.m.

On Saturday, March 13, at 12:50 p.m., the department responded to a Brush Fire on Hovey Road in Monson. The department returned to service at 2 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 1:20 a.m., the department responded to a structure fire on Griffin Street in Bondsville. The department returned to service at 6:45 a.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 1:36 p.m., the structure fire on South High Street in Bondsville. The department returned to service at 2:04 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 2:28 p.m., the alarm activation on Fletcher Street. The department returned to service at 2:55 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 3:17 p.m., the department responded to a structure fire on High Street in Bondsville. The department returned to service at 4:50 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 4:50 p.m., the department responded to a downed power line on Vicardav Avenue. The department returned at 5:14 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 8:53 p.m., the department responded to an alarm activation on Fletcher Street. The department returned to service at 9:50 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 4:43 p.m., the department responded to a Chimney Fire on Calkins Road in Three Rivers. The department returned to service at 5:30 p.m.

On Monday, March 15, at 9:42 p.m., the department responded to a call, requesting medical assistance on Hill Street. The department returned to service at 10:03 p.m.

On Monday, March 15, at 10:03 p.m., the department responded to a call, requesting medical assistance on Wright Street. The department returned to service at 10:26 p.m.

THREE RIVERS FD

The Three Rivers Fire Department responded to 12 calls March 9-15:

On Tuesday, March 9, at 12:43 p.m., the department provided mutual aid for a brush fire. The department returned to service at 4 p.m.

On Friday, March 12, at 10:38 a.m., the department responded to a smoke and carbon monoxide detector activation on Springfield Street. The department returned to service at 10:50 a.m.

On Friday, March

12, at 3:56 p.m., the department responded to an EMS incident on Mountain View. The department returned to service at 4:05 p.m.

On Friday, March 12, at 6:42 p.m., the department responded to an unauthorized burning on Belchertown Street. The department returned to service at 6:48 p.m.

On Saturday, March 13, at 6:54 p.m., the department responded to an EMS incident on Mountain View. The department returned to service at 7:26 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 1:19 a.m., the department provided mutual aid to the Bondsville Fire Department for a building fire. The department returned to service at 7:21 a.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 7:48 a.m., the department responded to an EMS incident on Overlook Drive. The department returned to service at 8:03 a.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 1:36 p.m., the department provided mutual aid to the Bondsville Fire Department. The department returned to service at 1:58 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 3:15 p.m., the mutual aid to Bondsville Fire Department. The department returned to service at 4:32 p.m.

On Monday, March 15, at 1:25 p.m., the department responded to an EMS incident on Mountain View. The department returned to service at 1:44 p.m.

On Monday, March 15, at 4:37 p.m., the department responded to a Chimney Fire on Calkins Road. The department returned to service at 5:21 p.m.

On Monday, March 15, at 4:38 p.m., the department provided mutual aid to Belchertown Fire Department for a brush fire. The department returned to service at 5:30 p.m.

BONDSVILLE FD

The Bondsville Fire Department responded to seven calls March 9-15:

On Tuesday, March 9, at 12:44 p.m., the department provided mutual aid to Palmer Road in the town of Monson for a brush fire. The department returned to service at 4:30 p.m.

On Thursday, March 11, at 7:30 p.m., the department responded to a water alarm activation on Third Street. The department returned to service at 7:50 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 1:19

a.m., the department responded to a structure fire on Griffin Street. The department returned to service at 9:09 a.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 1:36 p.m., the department responded to South High Street for an outside fire. The department returned to service at 1:52 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 3:15 p.m., the department responded to a structure fire on High Street. The department returned to service at 1:50 a.m.

On Sunday, March 15, at 4:42 p.m., the department provided mutual to Calkins Road in Three Rivers for a chimney fire. The department returned to service at 5:16 p.m.

On Monday, March 15, at 5:40 p.m., the department responded to a water problem on High Street. The department returned to service at 6:28 p.m.

MONSON FD

The Monson Fire Department responded to 21 EMS calls and seven fire calls March 8-14:

On Tuesday, March 9, at 12:38 p.m., the department responded to a brush fire in the area of Palmer Road. The department returned to service at 5:22 p.m.

On Wednesday, March 10, at 8:15 a.m., the department investigated a brush fire in the area of Palmer Road. The department returned to service at 9:46 a.m.

On Thursday, March 11, at 3:59 p.m., the department investigated a brush fire in the area of Palmer Road. The department returned to service at 6:19 p.m.

On Saturday, March 13, at 12:34 p.m., the department responded to a brush fire on Hovey Road. The department returned to service at 2:04 p.m.

On Saturday, March 13, at 5:58 p.m., the department conducted a fire investigation on Bridge Street. The department returned to service at 6:21 p.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 3:34 a.m., the department provided mutual aid on Griffin Street in Bondsville for a structure fire. The department returned to service at 5:27 a.m.

On Sunday, March 14, at 7:47 p.m., the department responded to a car accident in the area of Upper Palmer Road and Hospital Road. The department returned to service at 8:17 p.m.

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NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

Public Notices

TOWN OF PALMER PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Section 6 M.G.L. the Palmer Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Monday, March 29, 2021 at 5:00PM** virtually via Zoom. **Meeting ID: 958 5812 4910**
Password: 465805

The applicant, Chantal Mallalieu, is requesting a Finding §171.83J of the Palmer Zoning Ordinance. The finding request is for the construction of an 8' x 12' pressure treated landing over existing concrete steps on the property is located at 57 Jim Ash St, Palmer, MA 01069.

This parcel is also known as Assessor's Map 35, Lot 19.

A copy of the application may be inspected at the Planning Department office in the Administrative Building from 8am to 4:30pm Monday through Thursday.

Anyone interested in more information or wishing to be heard on the application can contact the Planning Department at 413-283-2605 or appear at the time and place designated above.

This notice shall also be posted on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website (<http://masspublicnotices.org>).

Dennis Fountain
Chairman, Palmer Zoning
Board of Appeals
03/11, 03/18/2021

PALMER PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Section 6 M.G.L., the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on **Monday, April 5, 2021 at 7:30PM** virtually via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 982 5179 2803
Password: 616011

The applicant, Hector Quiles, is seeking a Finding under section 171.83Q for reconstruction after destruction of a pre-existing, non-conforming structure on the property located at 61 French Drive, Palmer, MA. The applicant is requesting to alter the location and architectural elevations of the previous approvals granted for construction of a new single-family home. This parcel is also known as Assessor's Map 68, Lot 66.

A copy of the application may be inspected at the Planning Department office in Administrative Building from

8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Thursday.

Anyone interested in more information or wishing to be heard on the application can contact the Planning Department at 413-283-2605 or appear at the time and place designated above.

This notice shall also be posted on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website (<http://masspublicnotices.org>).

Michael Marciniac, Chairman
03/18, 03/25/2021

Town of Monson Zoning Board of Appeals LEGAL NOTICE

In accordance M.G. L. Chapter 40A § 11 the Monson Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing, **Thursday March 25, 2021 at 7:25 P.M.**, remotely, on the application of Dana Casher for a variance from the requirements of Section 3.2, Table 2, Dimensional & Density Regulations, of the Monson Zoning Bylaws. The applicant seeks to install a 12' x 24' canopied lean-to structure that will violate dimensional/density requirements. The property is located at 75 Thayer Rd, Map 6, Parcel 11D and is zoned Rural Residential, owned by Dana Casher

Zoom Information:
Login: <https://zoom.us/j/98804028349?pwd=M-2jVSURQWVhRNNm1x-UlpBTfZEZmZnZz09>

Dial: 1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 988 0402 8349

Password: 950520
03/11, 03/18/2021

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138, Section 15A, of the General Laws of Massachusetts, that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Monson will hold a public hearing on the application of Richard J. Krupczak, Echo Hill Winery, 101 Wilbraham Road, Monson, for an amendment-change of license classification to include cordials/liquor.

The hearing will be held through **Zoom, at 7:05 p.m. on Tuesday, March 23, 2021.**

If you desire to object thereto, you or your attorney should appear at that time and be heard.

MONSON BOARD OF
SELECTMEN
Licensing Authority
03/18/2021

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT HAMPDEN, Div.

**Probate & Family
Court Dept.
HD21E0002PP**

To Heidi Werbicki Flagg of Wales, in the County of Hampden, and to all other persons interested.

A petition has been presented to said Court by Debra Elaine Wellner Phillips of Shorterville, Alabama and Donna Jean Wellner Richards of Greensboro, North Carolina, representing that they hold as tenants in common an undivided part or share of land lying in Wales, in the County of Hampden, setting forth that they desire that all of said land may be sold at private sale or public auction for not less than Two Hundred Eighty Thousand (\$280,000.00) Dollars, and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof after full adjudication of the equitable claims contained in said petition and supplemental memorandum filed with the Court.

If you desire to object thereto you or your attorney should file a written appearance in said Court at Springfield before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the **twenty-fifth day of March 2021**, the return day of this citation.

Witness, BARBARA M. HYLAND, Esquire, First Justice of said Court, this twenty-second day of January, 2021.

Rosemary Saccomani
Register of Probate & Family Court

It is ordered that notice of said proceeding be given by delivering or mailing by registered or certified mail for a copy of the foregoing citation to all persons interested whose addresses are known fourteen days at least before said return day, and if any person is not so served, by mailing a copy thereof to the last known address of such person fourteen days at least before said return day; and by publishing a copy thereof once in each week for three successive weeks in **The Journal Register**, a newspaper published in Wales, the last publication to be one day at least

before said return day.
Witness, BARBARA M. HYLAND, Esquire, First Justice of said Court, this twenty-second day of January, 2021.

Rosemary Saccomani
Register of Probate & Family Court

before said return day.
Witness, BARBARA M. HYLAND, Esquire, First Justice of said Court, this twenty-second day of January, 2021.

Rosemary Saccomani
Register of Probate & Family Court
03/04, 03/11, 03/18/2021

MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Dream Junction, LLC to Freedom Credit Union dated December 1, 2014 and registered with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds Land Registration Office as Document Number 201,687 filed with Certificate of Title Number 35207, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at **11:00 a.m. on the 28th day of April, 2021**, on the mortgaged premises believed to be known as 1440-1446 North Main Street, Palmer, Hampden County, Massachusetts, and sometimes referred to as 1440-1446 Main Street, Palmer, Hampden County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

"1440-1446 North Main Street, Palmer, Hampden County, Massachusetts

The land in Palmer, Hampden County, Massachusetts:

Northeasterly by North Main Street eighty-eight and 08/100 (88.08) feet;

Southeasterly by Foundry Street one hundred eighty-one and 54/100 (181.54) feet;

Southwesterly one hundred thirty-four and 74/100 (134.72) feet; and;

Northwesterly forty-five and 27/100 (45.27) feet by Land now or formerly of Ware River Railroad Company; and

Northeasterly sixty-six and 56/100 (66.56) feet; and

Northwesterly one hundred thirty-four and 68/100 (134.68) feet by land now or formerly of Charles Warka Jr., et al.

All of said boundaries are determined by the Court to be located as shown on a plan drawn by Arthur E. Sullivan, Engineer, dated August 1, 1949, as modified and approved by the Court, filed in Land Registration Office, a copy of which is filed with Certificate of Title No. 5751.

BEING the same premises conveyed to mortgagor herein by Deed cert # 35207."

The premises will be sold subject to any and all restrictions, easements, improvements, covenants, outstanding tax titles, municipal or other public taxes, assessments, liens or claims in the nature of liens, and existing encumbrances of record superior to the mortgage, if any. Said premises will also be sold subject to all leases and tenancies having priority over said mortgage, to tenancies or occupation by persons on the premises now and at the time of said auction which tenancies or occupation are subject to said mortgage, to rights or claims in personal property installed by tenants or former tenants now located on the premises, also to all laws and ordinances including, but not limited to, all building and zoning laws and ordinances. It shall be the purchaser's sole responsibility to ascertain all items described in this paragraph and no representations are made concerning compliance with applicable zoning, building, sanitary or other state and/or municipal regulations.

TERMS OF SALE:
TWENTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 (\$20,000.00) DOLLARS will be required to be paid in cash, or by certified or bank cashier's check by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance of the purchase price in connection with the sale shall be paid in cash, or by certified or bank cashier's check within thirty (30) days of the date of the sale and the Deed transferred contemporaneously therewith at which time the purchaser shall also pay directly to the auctioneer a buyer's premium equal to five percent (5%) of the purchase price. The purchaser at the sale shall be required to sign a Memorandum of terms of sale containing the above terms at the Auction sale. The purchaser will be responsible for all closing costs, Massachusetts deed excise

stamps and all recording fees.
The sale may be postponed or adjourned from time to time, if necessary, by the attorney for the mortgagee at the scheduled time and place of sale. The description for the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.
Other terms, if any, will be announced at the sale.
Freedom Credit Union,
Present Holder of said Mortgage
By:
/s/ Jonathan C. Sapirstein
Jonathan C. Sapirstein
SAPIRSTEIN & SAPIRSTEIN, P.C.
1331 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 827-7500
Its Attorneys
Date: March 11, 2021
03/18, 03/25, 04/01/2021

(SEAL) THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT 21 SM 000203 ORDER OF NOTICE

To:
Susan M. Laterreux a/k/a Susan Urban, individually and as Executrix of the Estate of Richard O. Laterreux; Richard J. Laterreux, individually and as Personal Representative of the Estate of Richard O. Laterreux; Richard O. Nixdorf; Adam N. Laterreux; Jessica L. Paxton; Randall E. Paxton; Shawn Paxton

and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq)

Quicken Loans, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans Inc.

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Palmer, numbered 2 Carter Street, given by Richard O. Laterreux Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Quicken Loans Inc., dated October 18, 2017, and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 21914, Page 393 and now held by the Plaintiff by assignment, has/ have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **April 12, 2021** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of this Court on February 25, 2021.

Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
19798
03/18/2021

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage given by **Diane L. Nelson and Glenn W. Nelson to First Niagara Bank, N.A.** dated June 6, 2011, and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 18800, Page 513, of which mortgage Amos Financial LLC is the present holder by an assignment recorded with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 23051, Page 436, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 12 p.m. on April 16, 2021 at 150 Ware Street, Palmer, Hampden County, MA, 01069, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage:

TO WIT:
A certain parcel of land in Palmer Centre, so-called, Hampden County, Massachusetts, on the westerly side of the Ware Road, just South of the County road leading to Thorndike, at the southeast corner of land formerly of William King and referred to as

a heap of stones where an apple tree stood, running thence W 4°N, 8 rods, 17 links to a place referred to as a heap of stones; thence S 4° W, 6 rods, 15 links to a place referred to as marked by a stake and stones; thence E 13° S, 7 ¾ rods to another heap of stones at the Ware road (also formerly referred to as a County road); thence Northerly by said road to the place of beginning.

Containing about one half acre of land with buildings thereon.
Subject to well rights as set forth in instrument dated April 24, 1847, and recorded in Hampden County Registry of Deeds, Book 291, page 523.

Being the same premises conveyed to Grantor by deed record in Hampden County Registry of Deeds Book 18800, Page 504 and Book 18800, Page 507.

See also Book 18800, Page 510.

These premises will also be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed. These premises will also be sold subject to all leases and tenancies having priority over said Mortgage, to tenancies or rights of parties in possession now or at the time of said auction which are subject to said Mortgage, to rights or claims in personal property installed by tenants or former tenants now located on the premises, and to laws and ordinances including, but not limited to, all building and zoning laws and ordinances.

TERMS OF SALE:

The highest bidder in the sale of the premises shall deposit a bank treasurer's check, or certified check in the amount of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) at the time and place of the sale of the premises as a non-refundable earnest money deposit towards the purchase price to be held at the option of the Mortgagee as liquidated damages for any default by the successful bidder. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check to Joseph Perl, Attorney at Law, 203 Arlington St., Suite 2, Watertown, MA 02472, whose phone number is 781-704-7047, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The successful bidder shall be required to sign a Memorandum of Sale at the public auction containing the terms herein and any additional terms set forth in the Memorandum of Sale or announced at the public auction. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

In the event that the successful bidder at the public auction fails to perform in the time specified to purchase the premises, the Mortgagee reserves the right, at its sole election, to sell the premises by foreclosure deed to the other qualified bidders, in descending order beginning with the next highest bidder, provided that in each case the next highest bidder delivers to Mortgagee the amount of the required deposit within three (3) business days after written notice of the default of the previous highest bidder and promptly executes a Memorandum of Sale providing for performance within thirty (30) days of execution. Mortgagee also reserves the right, at its sole election, to assume the bid of any defaulting or declining bidder. The Mortgagee reserves the right to postpone this sale to a later date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the sale and to further postpone any adjourned sale date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the adjourned sale date.

Other terms, if any, to be

announced at the sale.

Amos Financial LLC
Present holder of said mortgage

By its attorney,
Joseph Perl, Esq.,
Law Office of Joseph Perl
203 Arlington St., Suite 2
Watertown, MA 02472
781-704-7047
03/04, 03/11, 03/18/2021

PALMER PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Section 11, M.G.L. the Palmer Planning Board will hold a public hearing on **Monday, April 5, 2021 at 7:00 PM** virtually via Zoom. **Meeting ID: 982 5179 2803**
Password: 616011

The applicant, RDL Associates, LLC, 136 Carmelina Circle, Ludlow MA 01056, is seeking a Special Permit as required by section 171.73 of the Palmer Zoning Ordinance to remove Earth materials from the property located off Palmer Street, Bondsville, also known as Assessor's Map 24 Lot 66.

A copy of the application may be inspected at the Planning Department office in the Town Administration Building Monday-Thursday 8am – 4:30pm

Anyone interested in more information or wishing to be heard on the application can contact the Planning Department at 283-2605 or appear at the time and place designated above.

This notice shall also be posted on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website (<http://masspublicnotices.org>).

Michael Marciniac,
Chairman
03/18, 03/25/2021

LEGAL NOTICE MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Timothy J. Petelle and Donna M. Petelle to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, acting solely as a nominee for Fremont Investment & Loan, dated September 29, 2006 and recorded in Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 16246, Page 570 (the "Mortgage") of which mortgage Deutsche Bank National Trust Company, as trustee for Morgan Stanley ABS Capital I Inc. Trust 2007-HE3 Mortgage Pass-through Certificates, Series 2007-HE3 is the present holder by Assignment from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., its successors and assigns to Deutsche Bank National Trust Company, as trustee for Morgan Stanley ABS Capital I Inc. 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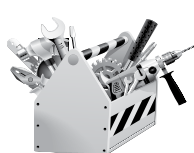
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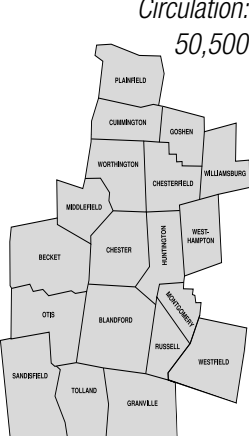
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33 Base Price \$32.50	34 Base Price \$33.00	35 Base Price \$33.50	36 Base Price \$34.00
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Pool COVID-19 testing may be extended at Monson schools

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

MONSON – After in-person learning resumed for Monson Public Schools students about a month ago, officials have allowed families to opt-in for COVID-19 pooled testing to help keep students, staff, and the entire community safe.

Math teacher and Pooled Testing Coordinator Leah Zippin said the initiative stems from a free program offered by the Mass. Department of Elementary and Secondary Schools and in collaboration with the Department of Public Health. Pooled testing requires testers to provide nasal swabs from pools of 10 people. If one individual in the group is positive for COVID-19, all individuals in the pool are then individually tested with the Abbott BinaXNOW rapid test.

Monson schools also are providing testing for anyone who reports COVID-19 symptoms. Zippin said even if a student tests negative, parents will be asked to pick up their child and take him or her for the two-day polymerase chain reaction test.

“Our goal was really to get the kids back (in the classroom),” Zippin said.

“This opportunity came about and offered a webinar in which I participated in. They originally offered it through March 28 and since then they’ve extended through the end of April.”

Zippin also said the state is considering extending the program to the end of the school year. In the past two weeks, Zippin said, Monson schools have tested 36 pools with no positive results.



Courtesy Photo
Ariana DiRico swabs student Natalie Clemons as part of the COVID-19 pooled testing program parents of Monson students can opt into.

The pool testing is “vital and helping people feel confident about being in school,” Zippin said.

“I know when they hear that they were negative, it just gives them comfort,” she said.

“We’re hoping this reduces fear and anxiety among the staff, students and parents, because we know how important it is for the students to be in-person and have an in-person learning experience. I’ve really only heard positive things about the program and we’re happy to offer this service.”

To for more details on Monson schools’ COVID-19 pooled testing, visit monsonschools.com.

Heidemann was recently promoted at Old Sturbridge Village

By Eileen Kennedy
Staff writer

STURBRIDGE – Old Sturbridge Village has promoted Derek Heidemann, who has been associated with the living museum since 2000, to be the newest director of Collections and Research, and to oversee the nonprofit’s Collections and Research Division. Old Sturbridge Village has over 40,000 pieces in their collection and a large research library on site.

“So ever since I’ve been a little kid I’ve been interested in history and museums,” Heidemann said recently. “When I was 6-years-old, I was going to the Higgins Armory in Worcester and hanging out. The director used to call me and invite to come sketch with her in the Great Hall.” The Armory has since closed and its armor and other pieces were acquired by the Worcester Art Museum.

Heidemann mother worked at OSV, and he started there as a volunteer in the junior intern program in 2000. He went on to join the Village’s interpretation part time team working in the Blacksmith Shop and other trade shops. After receiving a bachelors of arts degree in history in 2009, and a master’s of arts in history, with a focus in public history in 2010 from Clark University, he joined the Village’s fulltime interpretation team.

“It’s the way we present history to the public, whether it be a historical site or museums and exhibits,” Heidemann said, of studying public history. “It’s so much more about the experience someone has at a museum or an exhibit.”

And the timeframe that OSV encompasses, from 1790 to 1840, is one of his favorite periods in history.

In 2017, Heidemann curated a new firearms exhibit which is now known as the Armed and Equipped:

Firearms and the Militia in New England 1790-1840.

“Since I was a young kid I have been very interested in the country’s militia days,” he said, leading him to create the firearms exhibit.

In 2014 he was made the coordinator of historic trades and then interim assistant director of interpretation in 2020. “Derek Heidemann is the perfect choice to lead the Collections and Research division as we head into our 75th year,” said Jim Donahue, president and CEO. “His commitment to research and development, love of the Village’s collection and experience in interpretation positions him well to expand the use of the collection to engage and educate the public.”

While a lot of organizations have been forced to downsize over the past year, Old Sturbridge Village has continued to grow and expand on their programs and educational resources. This has given the Village the opportunity to bring in new talent and promote already existing talent within the organization. The divisions of program and interpretation, museum education, collections and research have all added staff to support the mission of the Village. With the growth of those divisions, the Village is implementing new strategies for promoting their wide variety of offerings, both in-person and online.

As a result, additional talent has also been brought in to support the marketing division and will continue to be transformed over the next year as the Village revolutionizes their digital content. As Old Sturbridge Village begins its 75th anniversary year, those who work there have much to look forward to and share with their visitors and neighboring communities, Donahue said.

Public Notices

More Notices Page 10

TOWN OF PALMER INVITATION FOR BIDS FY2021 CHEMICALS AND SUPPLIES PALMER WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT REBID#2021-01

Due to errors in publication this is Rebid of FY2022 Chemicals and Supplies- Wastewater Treatment Plant. Sealed Bids will be accepted for CHEMICALS and SUPPLIES for the Palmer Wastewater Treatment Plant for the period of July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022. Specifications can be obtained by calling 413-283-2603 or email rmcnutt@townofpalmer.com

Bids will be accepted until **March 25, 2021 at 2:00PM**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A 5% bid bond must be included with the Invitation to Bid.

All bids must be marked **“FY2022 Chemicals and Supplies- Palmer Wastewater Treatment Plant”**. This is a one year contract with the option for renewal for two (1) year periods at the sole discretion of the Town of Palmer.

LATE PROPOSALS will not be accepted. The bid is subject to the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30B, as amended to date. The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, if it is in the public interest to do so, and to waive minor informalities.

Ryan McNutt
Town Manager
03/11, 03/18/2021

LEGAL NOTICE MONSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Under the requirements of M.G.L. Chapt. 131, s.40, the Monson Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 7:15 P.M. REMOTELY**. Under consideration is a Notice of Intent for construction of a building addition, leach facility, and associated site improvements located at Map 18, Parcel 2. Applicant is Boulder Hill Development, LLC

<https://zoom.us/j/93461517169?pwd=SUJwR3lZbHAYZzdGT0ZQeFlwRXVTVz09>

Dial: 1.646.558.8656
Meeting ID: 934 6151 7169
Password: 878803

Monson Conservation Commission
03/18/2021

NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS (NOIRROF) March 18, 2021

Town of Holland 27 Sturbridge Road Holland, MA 01521 Telephone (413) 245-7108

TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES, GROUPS AND PERSONS;

On or about April 5th, 2021, the Town of Holland will submit a request to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for the release of Community Development Block Grant funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended, to undertake a project known as:

FY 2020 Holland Community Assistance Program:

Housing Rehabilitation Assistance Program. Rehabilitation of approximately twelve (12) housing units in the towns of Holland and Wales Massachusetts. Improvements will include repair and/or replacement of basic building systems, lead and hazardous materials abatement, removal of archi-

tectural barriers, and corrections to sanitary code and building code violations.

The activities proposed are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for this project is on file at Holland Town Hall in the Selectman’s office where it can be viewed Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, and at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 60 Congress Street, Springfield, Massachusetts 01104, where the record is available for review and may be examined or copied weekdays 9:00 am to 4:30 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to Stacy Stout, Environmental Certifying Officer for the town of Holland. All comments received by April 2nd, 2021 will be considered by the Town of Holland prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds.

RELEASE OF FUNDS

The Town of Holland certifies to the DHCD that Stacy Stout, in her official capacity as Environmental Certifying Officer, consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The DHCD’s approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities and allows the Town of Holland to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

The DHCD will accept objections to its release of funds and the Town of Holland’s certification for a period of fifteen days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases:

(a) The certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the Town of Holland;

(b) The Town of Holland has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58;

(c) The grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by the DHCD; or

(d) Another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality.

Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 55.76) and shall be addressed to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development at 100 Cambridge Street, Boston, MA 02114. Potential objectors should contact the DHCD to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Stacy Stout,
Town Administrator
Environmental Certifying Officer
Town of Holland
27 Sturbridge Road
Holland, MA 01521
03/18/2021

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